

Listing of Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-13. (Canceled)

Claim 14. (New) A method for joining an initial section (3) of a film tube (2) which is wound up in a band-like manner on a reel (1) with an end section (4) of a second film tube (5) extending over subsequent processing stations, especially a packaging system, in an at least partly band-like manner, with the band-like initial and end section (3, 4) each having two mutually superimposed outer lateral surfaces (10, 11, 15, 17) which each converge in their boundary regions into two interposed, inwardly folded inner lateral surfaces (17, 18, 19, 20) which thus form an inwardly situated fold axis (S, T), wherein in the two outer boundary regions of the end section (4) a tab (7) each is formed by placing a cut, which tab is joined in a tension-proof manner with the opposite initial section (3), with the initial section (3) overlapping the end section (4), and the placement of the cut on the end section (4) is carried out in such a way that a tab (7) each which projects in the longitudinal direction (L) of the film tube (5) is formed in the boundary regions of the end section (4), which tab is inserted between the

inner lateral surfaces (17, 18) of the initial section (3) and is joined to the initial section (3) in a tension-proof way.

Claim 15. (New) A method for joining an initial section (3) of a film tube (2) which is wound up in a band-like manner on a reel (1) with an end section (4) of a second film tube (5) extending over subsequent processing stations, especially a packaging system, in an at least partly band-like manner, with the band-like initial and end section (3, 4) each having two mutually superimposed outer lateral surfaces (10, 22, 15, 16) which each converge in their boundary regions into two interposed, inwardly folded inner lateral surfaces (17, 18, 19, 20) which thus form an inwardly situated fold axis (S, T), wherein the placing of the cut occurs by means of a cutting element (28) arranged on either side of the film tube (2, 5) in the two outer boundary regions of the initial section (3) along the inner fold axis (S) by horizontally moving the cutting element (28) from a first position in which it is spaced from the film tube (2, 5) to a second position in which it slits open the film tube (2, 5) laterally in the longitudinal direction of the film tube (2, 5), and the thus formed tabs (27) are each placed from the outside onto the outer lateral surfaces (15, 16) of the end section (4) and are joined to the same in a tension-proof way.

Claim 16. (New) A method according to claim 14, wherein the placement of the cut in the end section (4) occurs in such a way that slots (8) are formed in the boundary regions of the end section (4) which each extend in the longitudinal direction (L) of the film tube (5) into which the respective inner side surfaces (17, 18) of the initial section (3) are inserted along their fold axis (S).

Claim 17. (New) A method according to claim 14, wherein the width of the tabs (7) corresponds substantially to the width of the respective inner side surfaces (17, 18) of the initial section (3).

Claim 18. (New) A method according to claim 14, wherein the tension-proof connection of the initial and end sections (3, 4) of the film tubes (2, 5) is formed by welding.

Claim 19. (New) A method according to claim 18, wherein the welding occurs by means of ultrasonic sound.

Claim 20. (New) A method according to claim 14, wherein the initial section (3) is widened by means of negative pressure or electrostatic methods before the initial and end section (3, 4) are placed above one another.

Claim 21. (New) A method according to claim 18, wherein for welding the initial and end sections (3, 4) of the film tubes (2, 5) a welding anvil (14) each is inserted laterally between the inner side surfaces (17, 18, 19, 20) on which a tab (7, 27) each and a boundary region each of the initial and end section (3, 4) are placed and welded together.

Claim 22. (New) A packaging system with a reel (1) on which a film tube (2, 5) is wound up, a positioning and tensioning station (6) which unwinds the film tube (2, 5) from the reel (1) and supplies the same to subsequent sections of the system, a packaging unit (22) for processing film tube section and a conveying device (21) for removing packaged goods, wherein at least one cutting apparatus (12, 28) for cutting the film tube (2, 5) and a welding station (13) for processing the film tube (2, 5) and a welding station (13) for processing the film tube (2, 5) is arranged between the positioning and tensioning station (6) and the packaging unit (22), with the cutting apparatus (12, 28) being a cutting element (28) arranged on either side of the film tube (2, 5), which cutting element is horizontally movable from a first position in which it is spaced from the film tube (2, 5) to a second position in which it slits open the film tube (2, 5) laterally in the longitudinal direction of the film tube (2, 5).

Claim 23. (New) A packaging system according to claim 22, wherein the welding station (13) concerns an ultrasonic welding station.

Claim 24. (New) A packaging system according to claim 22, wherein pivoting suction means (30) are arranged between the positioning and tensioning station (6) and the packaging unit (22).